1: Hocart Y-5 (ca. 1920) 1929 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Lakemba

as Tongan drapery with a black stencilled border, but the technique of it differs in the following particulars:

The pieces have to be beaten out with care to be like paper, whereas for Tongan drapery they are beaten out roughly; the pieces are called *vakathimba*, not *tutu;* pieces with holes in them or soiled or reddish in color are not admitted as they are in Tongan drapery; to collect enough pieces is therefore a lengthy process; it takes two, three, or four years; different pattern plates are used of a Fijian design. Plate IV show them to be purely geometrical. There is only one thickness, all the pieces running lengthwise; the pieces are not glued together but moistened with fresh water, placed so as to overlap and beaten till they adhere firmly together, a process called *thokothoko;* no black lines are drawn to divide the *lalanga;* in fact there are no *lalanga.* Some specimens have two patterns disposed in checkers; others, two alternating bands of patterns. Dark discs are painted on here and there, but are called *matanisea,* not *tukisea.* When the reddish rubbings are compiete the sheet is handed over to an artist to put in a stencilled border called *potu*; some sheets have two borders; others have a third band down the middle; some have as many as four bands, but not in Lakemba. Fijian drapery is a noble thing (*metha vakaturanga*).

Mat Making

Mats are made of *kie* leaves. Mat making is rarely seen in Lakemba as most mats are brought from the Southern Islands. The process is as follows:

The leaves are dried in the sun for about three weeks; then cut with a shell into equal strips which remain attached at one end. The strips are made very fine for the border. The fringe is now made of colored wools, but is still called *kula* after the parrot that used to supply the feathers. Some mats have black strips inserted to form designs, but most are plain.

Fulanga mats are distinguished by their softness and are used for beds. Ono mats are small, rather stiff and made of very narrow strips two or three together with patterns in black. They are called *tambu kaisi* (forbidden to commoners), not that they were actually forbidden, but they were beyond their means.

Oil

Lau is famed for its scented oil, which is made as follows:

Coconut is grated to fill a basket, then baked in hot stones. Perfumes are added. A favorite one, sandalwood (*yasi*), is not found in Lau; the best comes from Mbua. When a piece of sandalwood has been procured, two or three young men will come in of an evening to rasp it. The dust of the sandalwood is mixed with the coconut, along with *mamba* fruit and *langakali* flowers. The mixture is then spread on a sheet of corrugated iron slightly tilted; the sun brings out the oil, which flows down into a bowl. Finally the pulp is squeezed to get out all the oil, which is bottled and corked with a stopper made of a leaf, rolled into a cone.

Tumeric is grated, mixed with water, and allowed to settle. It is then mixed with oil.

In Tumbou and Nasangalau if the sun will not shine when they want to "sun oil," the people sweep the floor of the church and the sun shines.

2: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934)1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Kambara

Paper mulberry

248 The paper mulberry (*masi*) is found on all the islands of Lau. *Masi ntchina* is the most common variety and the best for making barkcloth. It is cultivated extensively in the gardens of Namuka. On the other islands it usually is found in moist, damp places near the village, the trees scattered, not planted in rows as on Namuka. Ongea, Fulanga, and Kambara have grown the paper mulberry only for the last 10 years. Old people say that it grew on Kambara a long time ago, but died out, and that 10 years ago plants were imported from the island of Totoya.

The paper mulberry is planted by men only, preferably during the dry season. Women cut down the trees when they have reached a diameter of about 6 cm. and make barkcloth from the inner bark.

Tobacco

249 276 [177] Since tobacco was introduced into Lau in historic times, the demand for it has been great and constant. However, though it will grow on all the islands, little tobacco is planted. Namuka produces more than any other island of the southern group.

The tobacco seed is planted by men only. When the plants are about 7 cm. high they are transplanted and laid out in rows about a meter apart. The leaves are cut by men, but women hang them up to dry. They tie the leaves together in pairs and hang them over a cord in the house, for they must not dry in the sun.

Tobacco is smoked by both sexes. Usually the leaves are rolled into a dry banana leaf and smoked like a cigarette.

Fragrant plants

249 303 Several plants are cultivated for perfuming coconut oil. *Makosoi (Canangium odoratum)* is a small shrub which usually grows on the sandy flat behind the village near the limestone cliff. It is planted at any time by either men or women. Women pick the flowers and extract the oil from them.

Langakali (Elacocharis articulata) is a shrub which grows wild in the bush but which is planted in the villages by women. The wild plants bloom from March to July but the cultivated ones bloom all year round. The flowers are used for perfume.

[757] *Makita (Parinarium glaberrimum)* is cultivated on Mothe and Kambara by men and women. The fruit is used for perfuming oil, for dyeing the hair, and for medicine. The natives claim it cures sores on the skin.

Sandalwood (*yasi*) is the favorite perfume. The tree does not grow well and the bark is not very fragrant in southern Lau. The women plant a few trees by seed, but the best sandalwood comes from Mbua on Vanau Mbalavu.

2: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934)1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Kambara

COCONUT-LEAF MATS

Coconut-leaf mats, which have no trade value, are made throughout the Lau group. There are two types, the *tambakau* and the *mbekambeka*. 285

The *tambakau* mat is made by either a man or a woman out of a single young, tender coconut leaf. The leaf is dried in the sun until it turns yellow brown. Then the midrib of the leaf is trimmed and the close leaflets are plaited from the midrib outward. The ends are turned under and worked into the weave. *Tambakau* mats are used as mat cushions on the floor of the dwelling house to protect the floor mats. They are also used as door screens. [352]

Mbekambeka are rough mats made easily and quickly by either men or women, and used for door screens, fish ropes, and protective coverings for rolls of dried pandanus, pandanus mats, and barkcloth. The *mbekambeka* mat is made out of a single mature coconut leaf. The midrib of the leaf is trimmed and split lengthwise. The open leaflets of each half are plaited from the midrib out, and the halves are rejoined by braiding together the ends of the leaflets, starting at the upper end and working toward the lower end of the leaf.

BASKETS

The most common type of women's basket in Lau is the *kato tchina*, which is common in western Polynesia. The type is called *ola tu* in Samoa and has been described by Buck (2, p. 198; pl. 14, *B*). Other women's baskets are the fishing basket (*noke*) and the carrying basket (*ketekete*). [415]

Baskets of pandanus made by the method of right-angled plaiting have been introduced recently into Lau from Fiji proper. *Walaki* baskets of the coiled type are made in Lau and are imported from Rotuma. *Walaki* baskets of the twined type are not made in Lau but are imported from Fiji proper. [177] [439]

Temporary plates (*i tambe*) of the common western Polynesian type (called *mailo* in Samoa, Buck, 2, p. 183; pl. 12, *C*; fig. 91), made of open coconut leaflets, are used for feasts in Lau and discarded immediately afterwards.

Permanent trays made of closed coconut leaflets are called *lalakai*. They are used by persons of high rank only and are rarely seen in southern Lau.

COCONUT OIL

Coconut oil (*waliwali*) is made only by women in Lau. Usually the women of a household or a subclan cooperate in the task. The Lauans like their coconut oil strongly and pungently scented, so gathering and combining fragrant flowers, fruit, bark, leaves, and roots is the first step in the process of oil making. The following plants are used: 303

2: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934)1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Kambara

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FLOWERS

langakali: grows wild in the bush and is also cultivated
makosoi: cultivated
mbuambua (Guettarda speciosa)
ronga
mbuandromu
uthi (Evodia hortensis)
vandra

FRUIT

makita: cultivated on Mothe and Kambara
mamba: imported from Lakemba and Totoya
lemba (Eugenia neurocalyx)
seasea (Eugenia richii)
paonggo
mbulu: imported from Totoya

BARK

sandalwood: imported from Lakemba, Oneata, and Mbua
mathou (Cinnamomum): imported from Kandavu and Tailevu

LEAVES

cinnamon: imported from Lakemba and Viti Levu
lenggalengga (Croton metallicus)

ROOTS

pako

The tough outer skin is removed from fruit, which is then pounded with a stone on a flat slab and added to the oil. Bark and roots are pounded in the same way. Some plants are either used alone or are combined with other plants, according to the preference of the oil makers. Sandalwood, *langakali*, and *makosoi* are most highly prized. Other plants are used only in combinations, never alone.

Perfumed coconut oil is made as follows:

When the fragrant plants have been collected, about 40 to 50 ripe coconuts (*i loloi*) are gathered off the ground in baskets (*kato mbolambola*) by either men or women, husked, and grated into a wooden bowl. The grated coconut is strained with a hibiscus strainer and the oil is poured into a bowl of the *sendre* type. The fragrant plants are added to the oil, and the bowl is covered with barkcloth or a mat and set over night. The next day the mixture is poured into an old dugout placed in the sun. A piece of sheet iron is occasionally used instead of the dugout today. The mixture is stirred frequently. When the oil starts to run the dugout is tilted slightly in order to drain the oil into a bowl placed under one end. The oil is now ready for use.

[415 439]

Coconut oil was formerly bottled in gourd containers made of the fruit of the *fango* (*Lagenaria vulgaris*) which was imported ready for use from Viti Levu. The *fango* does not grow in southern Lau. Gourd containers were corked with coconut fiber (*i songo ni tavaya*) wrapped with tapa. The storing of oil is not a problem today for the natives keep only enough oil on hand for their personal use, and it is kept in imported bottles.

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Perfumed coconut oil is used by men, women, and children to keep the skin soft and protect it from the sun, the cold, and the salt water. After bathing in the sea a little oil is poured on the hand, rubbed between the palms, and over the body, especially on the legs, arms, and hair. Oil is used profusely by [832] *meke* dancers. The natives say that the sheen and perfume of oil on the skin enhances sexual attraction.